Aethiopistische Forschungen

Begründet von

Ernst Hammerschmidt

Fortgeführt von

Siegbert Uhlig

Herausgegeben von

Alessandro Bausi

Band 87

2022

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Endalew Assefa

Descriptive Grammar of Ezha

A Gurage Language of Ethiopia (Ethio-Semitic)

2022

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

PJ
9288.1
.A87
2022
cop. 2

IAS

Titelvignette: Adelheid Kordes

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über https://dnb.de abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet at https://dnb.de.

For further information about our publishing program consult our website https://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de

© Otto Harrassowitz GmbH & Co. KG, Wiesbaden 2022
This work, including all of its parts, is protected by copyright. Any use beyond the limits of copyright law without the permission of the publisher is forbidden and subject to penalty. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.
Printed on permanent/durable paper.
Typesetting and layout: Francesca Panini
Printing and binding: Memminger MedienCentrum AG
Printed in Germany

ISSN 0170-3196
ISBN 978-3-447-11843-9
eISSN 2749-0017
eISBN 978-3-447-39281-5

Table of Contents

List of Tables xi
List of Figures xv
Acknowledgements xvii
Symbols and Abbreviations xix
Preamble xxi
Chapter 1: Introduction 1
1.1. The Language Area 1
1.2. Classification of Gurage Languages 2
1.3. Brief Survey of Related Literature 5
1.4. The Language Data 8
1.5. Methodology and Procedures 8
Chapter 2: Phonetics/Phonology 11
2.1. Identification of Phonemes 11
2.1.1. Consonants 11
2.1.2. Vowels 14
2.1.3. Minimal and Near Minimal Pairs 14
2.1.3.1. Consonants 14
2.1.3.2. Vowels 17
2.2. Distribution of Phonemes 17
2.2.1. Consonant Distribution 17
2.2.2. Vowel Distribution 23
2.3. Clusters of Phonemes 25
2.3.1. Sonorant–Obstruent Sequences 25
2.3.2. Obstruent–Sonorant Sequences 26
2.3.3. Sonorant–Sonorant Sequences 26
2.3.4. Obstruent–Obstruent Sequences 26
2.4. Gemination 28
2.5. Phonotactic Constraints 30
2.6. Syllable Structure 30
2.7. Phonological/Morphophonemic Processes 32
2.7.1. Assimilation 32

2.7.1.1. Homorganic Nasal Assimilation 32
2.7.1.2. Total Assimilation of *t* 35
2.7.1.3. Total assimilation of *r* 38
2.7.1.4. Palatalization 38
2.7.2. Labialization 42
2.7.3. Non-Assimilative Palatalization 43
2.7.4. Depalatalization 44
2.7.5. Vowel Fronting 44
2.7.6. Vowel Deletion 46
2.7.7. Deletion of a Glide and a Vowel 47
2.7.8. Epenthesis 48
2.7.8.1. Vowel Insertion 48
2.7.8.2. Glide Insertion 49
2.7.9. Spirantization or Fricativization 50
Chapter 3: Minor Word Classes 53
3.1. Pronouns 53
3.1.1. Personal Pronouns 54
3.1.2. Interrogative Pronouns 57
3.1.3. Indefinite Pronouns 61
3.1.4. Reflexive Pronouns 62
3.1.5. Reciprocal Pronouns 64
3.1.6. Selective Pronouns 64
3.1.7. Pronouns of Totality 65
3.1.8. Pronouns of Isolation/Emphatic Pronouns 66
3.2. Determiners 67
3.2.1. Demonstratives 67
3.2.2. Quantifiers 69
3.2.2.1. Cardinal Numerals 69
3.2.2.2. Ordinal Numerals 73
3.2.3. Non-Numeral Quantifiers 73
3.3. Adpositions 74
Chapter 4: Major Word Classes and their Grammatical Categories 77
4.1. Noun 77
4.1.1. Simple Nouns 78
4.1.2. Derived Nouns 80
4.1.2.1. Abstract Nouns 81
4.1.2.2. Verbal Nouns 81
4.1.2.3. Associative Agent Nouns 82
4.1.2.4. Agent Nouns 82

4.1.2.5. Result Nouns 83
4.1.2.6. Instrumental Nouns 83
4.1.2.7. Language Names 84
4.1.3. Compound Nouns 84
4.1.3.1. Exocentric Compounds 85
4.1.3.2. Endocentric Compounds 86
4.1.4. Noun Inflection 87
4.1.4.1. Number 87
4.1.4.2. Gender 92
4.1.4.3. Definiteness 93
4.1.4.4. Case 98
4.2. Adjectives 109
4.2.1. Simple Adjectives 110
4.2.2. Derived Adjectives 111
4.2.3. Compound Adjectives 112
4.2.4. Semantic Sub-Classes of Adjectives 112
4.2.5. Inflection of Adjectives 113
4.2.6. Use of Adjectives 115
4.2.6.1. Attributive Use 116
4.2.6.2. Predicative Use 116
4.3. Verbs 116
4.3.1. Ezha Verb Types 117
4.3.2. Base Formation 118
4.3.2.1. Type-A Verbal Bases 119
4.3.2.2. Type-B Verbal Bases 121
4.3.2.3. Type-C Verbal Bases 123
4.3.2.4. Irregular Verbal Bases 124
4.3.3. Stem Derivation 128
4.3.3.1. Simple Stem Derivation 128
4.3.3.2. Complex Stem Derivation 130
4.3.3.3. Compound Verbs 135
4.3.4. Verbal Inflection 137
4.3.4.1. Subject Agreement 138
4.3.4.2. Object Agreement 141
4.3.4.3. Applicatives 145
4.3.4.4. Aspect, Tense, and Mood 149
4.3.4.5. Negation 158
4.3.4.6. The Impersonal 160
4.3.4.7. Converbs 162

4.3.4.8. Copular and Existential Verbs....165
4.4. Adverbs....175
4.4.1. Simple Adverbs....175
4.4.2. Derived Adverbs....176
4.4.3. Compound Adverbs....178
4.4.4. Semantic Sub-Classes of Adverbs....179
4.4.4.1. Adverbs of Time....179
4.4.4.2. Adverbs of Frequency....180
4.4.4.3. Adverbs of Manner....180
4.4.4.4. Adverbs of Place....180
4.4.5. Adverbs in Use....180
Chapter 5: Phrasal Categories....183
5.1. Noun Phrase....183
5.2. Adpositional Phrase....193
5.3. Adjective Phrase....195
5.4. Adverb Phrase....196
5.5. Verb Phrase....197
5.5.1. Complementation....198
5.5.1.1. Verb Phrases Headed by Transitive Verbs....198
5.5.1.2. Verb Phrases Headed by Intransitive Verbs....200
5.5.1.3. Verb Phrases Headed by Copular and Existential Verbs....201
5.5.2. Modification....202
5.5.3. Verb Argument Structures....206
5.5.3.1. Argument Structure of One Place (Intransitive and Non-Personal) Verbal Predicates....206
5.5.3.2. Argument Structure of Two Place (Monotransitive) Verbal Predicates....208
5.5.3.3. Argument Structure of Three Place (Ditransitive) Verbal Predicates....212
Chapter 6: Clausal Syntax....219
6.1. Clausal Types....219
6.1.1. Simple Declarative Clauses....219
6.1.2. Interrogative Clauses....222
6.1.2.1. Polar Interrogatives....222
6.1.2.2. Content Interrogatives....225
6.1.3. Subordinate Clauses....227
6.1.3.1. Conditionals....228
6.1.3.2. Purpose/Reason Clauses....230
6.1.3.3. Temporal Clauses....231
6.1.3.4. Relative Clauses....232

6.1.4. Clauses Involving Converbs....237
6.1.5. Clauses Involving Verbal Nouns....240
6.1.6. Complement Clauses....241
6.2. Clausal Comparison....242
6.3. Focus Marking....244
6.3.1. Morphological Focus Marking....244
6.3.2. Syntactic Focus Marking....248
6.4. Topicalization....249
Appendices....251
Appendix 1: Verbal Conjugations....251
Appendix 2: Greetings....257
Appendix 3: Narrative Texts....262
Appendix 4: Sample Ezha–English Word List....271
References....279

List of Tables

Table 1: Consonants of Ezha 12
Table 2: Vowels of Ezha 14
Table 3: Word-final consonant clusters in Ezha 28
Table 4: Geminate and non-geminate occurrence of consonants in Ezha 29
Table 5: Major syllable types in Ezha 31
Table 6: Personal pronouns in Ezha 54
Table 7: Personal pronouns marked for accusative, dative, and genitive cases 55
Table 8: Personal pronouns marked for ablative case in Ezha 56
Table 9: Possessive pronominal suffixes in Ezha 57
Table 10: Interrogatives in Ezha 58
Table 11: Indefinite pronouns in Ezha 61
Table 12: Reflexive pronouns in Ezha 63
Table 13: Reciprocal pronouns in Ezha 64
Table 14: Selective pronouns in Ezha 65
Table 15: Pronouns of totality in Ezha 65
Table 16: Ezha pronouns of isolation 66
Table 17: Demonstratives in Ezha 67
Table 18: Basic cardinal numerals in Ezha 70
Table 19: The teens in Ezha 70
Table 20: The decades in Ezha 71
Table 21: Ezha ordinal numerals derived from the basic cardinals 73
Table 22: Adpositions in Ezha 75
Table 23: Major patterns for Ezha simple nouns 78
Table 24: Count and mass nouns in Ezha 79
Table 25: Kinship terms in Ezha 79
Table 26: Proper nouns in Ezha 80
Table 27: Ezha exocentric compounds 86
Table 28: Endocentric compounds in Ezha 87
Table 29: Suppletive singular and plural nouns in Ezha 88
Table 30: Internally modified plural nouns in Ezha 88
Table 31: Lexical gender distinction in Ezha 92

Table 32: Major patterns of Ezha simple adjectives 110
Table 33: Simple adjectives with verbal correlates in Ezha 111
Table 34: Adjectival derivational suffixes in Ezha 111
Table 35: Compound adjectives in Ezha 112
Table 36: Ezha adjectives in different semantic fields 113
Table 37: Some reduplicative plural adjectives in Ezha 114
Table 38: Ezha verb types based on the number of root consonants 117
Table 39: Base patterns of tri- and quadriconsonantal verbs in Ezha 119
Table 40: Sample type-A, type-B, and type-C verbs in Ezha 119
Table 41: Base patterns of Ezha monoconsonantal verbs 125
Table 42: Base formation of Ezha biconsonantal verbs with a *CVC* pattern 126
Table 43: Base formation of Ezha biconsonantal verbs with a terminal vowel 126
Table 44: Base formation of Ezha biconsonantal verbs with an initial vowel 127
Table 45: Ezha compound verbs with *bar-* 'say' and *amənnə-* 'make' 135
Table 46: Ezha compound verbs with ideophones borrowed from Amharic 136
Table 47: Ezha compound verbs involving reduplicated ideophones 136
Table 48: Ezha compound verbs that only use *bar-* 'say' as a second element 137
Table 49: Subject agreement affixes in Ezha 138
Table 50: Ezha perfective verbal conjugation 139
Table 51: Imperfective and jussive conjugations in Ezha 140
Table 52: Imperative conjugations in Ezha 141
Table 53: Object agreement suffixes in Ezha 142
Table 54: Paradigm of 2MS object suffixes attached to perfectives and imperfectives 143
Table 55: Paradigm of the 1S object suffix attached to perfective verbs 144
Table 56: Paradigm of the 3MS object suffix attached to perfective verbs 145
Table 57: The benefactive suffixes in Ezha 146
Table 58: Paradigm of a 3MS perfective verb with benefactive suffixes 146
Table 59: The malefactive allomorphs in Ezha 148
Table 60: Paradigm of a perfective verb with malefactive suffixes 148
Table 61: Conjugation of the Ezha *t*-converb 163
Table 62: The present copula in Ezha 166
Table 63: The past tense copula in Ezha 167
Table 64: Copula in the future tenses in Ezha 168
Table 65: Ezha copular negation in the past, present, and future tenses 169
Table 66: The Ezha verb of existence in the present tense 171
Table 67: The Ezha verb of existence in the future tenses 173
Table 68: The present negative verb of existence in Ezha 174
Table 69: The negative verb of existence in the past and future tenses 174
Table 70: Ezha simple adverbs 176

Table 71: Ezha time adverbs derived from quantifiers 176
Table 72: Ezha adverbs of place 177
Table 73: Ezha time adverbs derived from place adverbs 177
Table 74: Reduplicative time adverbs in Ezha 178
Table 75: Compound adverbs in Ezha 179
Table 76: Subordinators in Ezha 228

References

Aweke Tsegaye 2012. *Deixis in Ezha*, MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University (2012).

Bauer, L. 2003. *Introducing Linguistic Morphology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003).

Baye Yimam 1999. 'Root Reduction and Extension in Amharic', *Ethiopian Journal of Language and Literature*, 9 (1999), 56–88.

— 2006. 'The Interaction of Tense, Aspect, and Agreement in Amharic Syntax', in J. M. Mugane, J. P. Hutchinson, and D. A. Worman, eds, *Selected Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference on African Linguistics* (Somerville, MA: Cascadilla, 2006), 193–202.

— 2008. **የአማርኛ ሰዋስው** ('Amharic grammar'), 2nd edn (Addis Ababa: Eleni Private Limited Press, 2008).

Bybee, J. 1984. *Morphology: A Study into the Relation between Meaning and Form*, Typological Studies in Language, 9 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984).

Corver, N., and H. V. Riemsdijk 2001. *Semi-Lexical Categories*, Studies in Generative Grammar, 59 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2001).

Central Statistical Agency 2008. *Summary and Statistical Report of the 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Central Statistical Agency, 2008).

Degif Petros Banksira 2000. *Sound Mutations: The Morphophonology of Chaha* (Philadelphia, PA–Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000).

Dixon, R. M. W. 2010. *Basic Linguistic Theory*, I: *Methodology*; II: *Grammatical Topics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Endalew Assefa 2010. *The Syntax of Ezha Nominal Functors: Introduction, Morphosyntactic Description, Syntactic Derivation, Summary and Conclusion* (Riga: VDM Publishing House Limited, 2010).

— 2019. 'Typological Comparison of Relativization in Amharic and Ezha', *Journal of Universal Language*, 20/2 (2019), 29–52.

Fekede Menuta 2002. *Morphology of Ezha*, MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University (2002).

— 2005. 'Derivation of Verbs in Ezha', *Orient*, 40 (2005), 172–189.

— 2006. 'Morphology of Ezha Pronouns', in S. Uhlig, M. Bulakh, D. Nosnitsin, and T. Rave, eds, *Proceedings of the XVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Hamburg July 20–25, 2003*, Aethiopistische Forschungen, 65 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 754–762.

Getahun Amare 2009. *Argobba Verb Morphology and Syntax: A Documentation with Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar as Analytic Framework*, Doktoravhandlinger ved NTNU, 159 (Trondheim: Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 2009).

Girma Awgichew 2005. 'Tense and Aspect as Temporal Relations: A Case Study in Ethio-Semitic', *Ethiopian Languages Research Center Working Papers*, 1/1 (2005), 87–133.

Greenberg, J. H. 1970. *The Languages of Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1970).

Haspelmath, M. 1995. 'The Converb as a Cross-linguistically Valid Category', in M. Haspelmath and E. König, eds, *Converbs in Cross-Linguistic Perspective: Structure and Meaning of Adverbial Verb Forms—Adverbial Participles, Gerunds*, Empirical Approaches to Language Typology, 13 (Berlin–New York, NY: Mouton de Gruyter, 1995), 1–55.

Hetzron, R. 1972. *Ethiopian Semitic: Studies in Classification*, Journal of Semitic Studies, Monograph, 2 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972).

— 1975. 'The *t*-converb in Western Gurage', *Afro-Asiatic Linguistics*, 2/2 (1975), 15–26.

— 1977. *The Gunnän-Gurage Languages*, Ricerche: Studi di Semitistica e del Vicino Oriente Antico, 12 (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1977).

— 1996. 'The Two Futures in Central and Peripheral Western Gurage', in G. Hudson, ed., *Essays on Gurage languages and culture* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996), 153–173.

Hetzron, R., and M. L. Bender 1976. 'The Ethio-Semitic Language', in M. L. Bender, J. D. Bowen, R. L. Cooper, and C. A. Ferguson, eds, *Language in Ethiopia*, Ford Foundation Language Surveys (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 23–33.

Hudson, G. 2013. *Northeast African Semitic: Lexical Comparisons and Analysis*, Porta Linguarum Orientalium, 26 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013).

Kiss, K. 1995. 'Identificational Focus versus Information Focus', *Lingua*, 74/2 (1995), 245–273.

Leslau, W. 1950. *Ethiopic Documents: Gurage*, Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, 14 (New York, NY: Viking Fund, 1950).

— 1951. 'Le type *läbsä* en gouragué', *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, 10 (1951), 85–98.

— 1967. 'The Jussive in Ezha', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 12/1 (1967), 66–82.

— 1969–1970. 'Ezha Riddles', *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, 23 (1969–1970, pub. 1971), 43–78.

— 1969a. 'Towards the Classification of Gurage Dialects', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 14/1 (1969), 96–109.

— 1969b. '*Äsät*, the Soul of the Gurage', *Africa*, 39/3 (1969), 281–290.

— 1979a. *Etymological Dictionary of Gurage* (*Ethiopic*), I: *Individual Dictionaries* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979).

— 1979b. *Etymological Dictionary of Gurage* (*Ethiopic*), II: *English–Gurage Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979).

— 1979c. *Etymological Dictionary of Gurage* (*Ethiopic*), III: *Etymological Section* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979).

— 1981. *Ethiopians Speak: Studies in Cultural Background*, IV: *Muher*, Äthiopistische Forschungen, 11 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1981).

— 1982. *Gurage Folklore: Ethiopian Folktales, Proverbs, Beliefs and Riddles*, Studien zur Kulturkunde, 63 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1982).

— 1995. *Reference Grammar of Amharic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1995).

Lyons, C. 1999. *Definiteness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Meyer, R. 2006. *Wolane: Descriptive Grammar of an East Gurage Language* (*Ethiosemitic*), Grammatical Analyses of African Languages, 31 (Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2006).

— 2011. 'Gurage', in S. Weninger, ed., in collaboration with G. Khan, M. P. Streck, and J. C. E. Watson, *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, 36 (Berlin–Boston, MA: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 1220–1275.

— 2019. 'Gurage (Muher)', in J. Huehnergard and N. Pat-El, eds, *The Semitic Languages*, Routledge Language Family Series, 2nd edn (Abingdon–New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), 227–256.

Noonan, M. 1985. 'Complementation', in T. Shopen, ed., *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, II: *Complex Constructions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 42–140.

Payne, T. 1997. *Describing Morphosyntax: A Guide for Field Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Polotsky, H. J. 1938. 'Études de grammaire gouragué', *Bulletin de la Société de linguistique de Paris*, 39 (1938), 137–175.

— 1951. *Notes on Gurage Grammar* (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society, 1951).

Radford, A. 1997. *Syntactic Theory and the Structure of English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Rose, S. 2007. 'Chaha (Gurage)', in A. S. Kaye, ed., *Morphologies of Asia and Africa*, I (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 403–427.

Tsehay Abza 2001. *Noun morphology of Ezha*, Senior Essay, Addis Ababa University (2001).

— 2008. *Comparative Morphology of Ezha, Kistane and Muher*, MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University (2001).

Ullendorff, E. 1955. *The Semitic Languages of Ethiopia: A Comparative Phonology* (London: Taylor's Foreign Press, 1955).

Völlmin, S. 2017. *Towards a Grammar of Gumer. Phonology and Morphology of a Western Gurage Variety*, PhD Dissertation, Universität Zürich (2017).

Wetter, A. 2010. *Das Argobba: Eine deskriptive Grammatik der Varietät von Shonke und T'ollaha* (*Zentraläthiopien*), Grammatical Analyses of African Languages, 38 (Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2010).

Wudie Worku 1987. *Ezha Phonology*, Senior Essay, Addis Ababa University (1987).